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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/54/598 and Corr.1 and 2)*]

54/139. Improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat

The General Assembly,

Recalling Articles 1 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as Article 8, which provides that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs,

Recalling also the goal, contained in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,[1] of the achievement of overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, by the year 2000,

Taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition,

Recalling its resolutions 53/119 of 9 December 1998 on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat and 53/221 of 7 April 1999 on human resources management,

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[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

Welcoming the progress made in improving the representation of women at the D–1 level, but concerned that the representation of women at the senior and policy-making levels remains significantly below the goal of 50/50 gender distribution at these levels,

Welcoming also the fact that the percentage of women appointed at the D–2 level and promoted to the D–1 level exceeded the goal of 50 per cent,

Concerned that the appointment of women at all other levels, with the exception of the P–2 level, falls significantly below the goal of 50 per cent, and concerned at the incremental pace at which the overall representation of women in the Secretariat has increased,

Concerned also that some existing arrangements with Member States may impede the employment of spouses of United Nations staff members,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General and the framework for action contained therein;[2]

2. *Reaffirms* the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at the D–1 level and above, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

3. *Regrets* that the goal of 50/50 gender distribution will not be met by the year 2000, and urges the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to realize significant progress towards this goal by the end of 2000;

4. *Requests* the General Assembly, at its special session entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", to be held in June 2000, to consider further forward-looking strategies for achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at the D–1 level and above, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

5. *Welcomes* the ongoing personal commitment of the Secretary-General to meeting the goal of gender equality and his assurance that gender balance will be given the highest priority in his continuing efforts to bring about a new management culture in the Organization, including full implementation of the special measures for the achievement of gender equality;[3]

6. *Also welcomes* the continued provision of specific training programmes on gender mainstreaming and gender issues in the workplace, tailored to meet the special needs of individual departments, and commends those heads of departments and offices who have launched gender training for their managers and staff;

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[2] A/54/405.

[3] ST/AI/1999/9.

7. *Strongly encourages* heads of departments and offices who have not yet organized such training to do so by the end of the next biennium;

8. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to implement fully and to monitor the strategic plan of action for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (1995–2000)[4] in order to make notable progress towards the goal of 50/50 gender distribution by the end of the year 2000, especially at the D–1 level and above;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that individual managers are held accountable for implementing the strategic plan within their areas of responsibility;

10. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys and to pursue good offices on his behalf, especially in matters related to peacekeeping, peace-building, preventive diplomacy and economic and social development, and in operational activities, including as resident coordinators, as well as to appoint more women to other high-level positions;

11. *Welcomes* the inclusion of the objective of improving gender balance in action plans on human resources management for individual departments and offices, and encourages cooperation between the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat in the further elaboration and monitoring of these plans, which will include concrete strategies and specific targets for improving women's representation in each department and office;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to monitor closely the progress made by departments and offices in meeting the goal of gender balance and to ensure that the appointment and promotion of suitably qualified women will be no less than 50 per cent of all appointments and promotions until the goal of 50/50 gender distribution is met, including through full implementation of the special measures for women and the development of mechanisms to encourage, monitor and assess effectively the performance of programme managers in meeting targets for improving women's representation;

13. *Takes note* of the revised terms of reference of the Steering Committee for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat issued by the Secretary-General in June 1999,[5] in particular its role in monitoring the implementation of the special measures for the achievement of gender balance;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to develop innovative recruitment strategies to identify and attract suitably qualified women candidates, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in other Member States that are unrepresented or under-represented in the Secretariat and in occupations in which women are under-represented;

15. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue his work to create within existing resources a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including through the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements and child-care and elder-care needs, as well as through the provision of more comprehensive information to prospective

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[4] A/49/587 and Corr.1, sect. IV.

[5] ST/SGB/1999/9, sect. 2.

candidates and new recruits on spouse-employment opportunities and the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments and offices;

16. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to develop further the policy against harassment, including sexual harassment, and to issue clear, detailed guidelines for its application at Headquarters and in the field;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to enable the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to monitor effectively and facilitate progress in the implementation of the strategic plan and the special measures for women, including by ensuring access to the information required to carry out that work;

18. *Strongly encourages* Member States to support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at the D–1 level and above, by identifying and regularly submitting more women candidates for appointment to intergovernmental, judicial and expert bodies, identifying and proposing national recruitment sources that will assist the organizations of the United Nations system in identifying suitable women candidates, in particular from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and encouraging more women to apply for positions within the Secretariat, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes and the regional commissions, including in areas in which women are under-represented, such as peacekeeping, peace-building and other non-traditional areas;

19. *Also strongly encourages* Member States to identify women candidates for assignment to peacekeeping missions and to improve the representation of women in military and civilian police contingents;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fourth session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including by providing statistics on the number and percentage of women in all organizational units and at all levels throughout the United Nations system and on the implementation of departmental action plans for the achievement of gender balance.

83rd plenary meeting
17 December 1999